

of free and fair trade in our markets, including lower prices. It will also ensure that consumers and businesses will not become victims of anticompetitive market abuses. This legislation will help us in enforcing our antitrust laws against foreign and international firms who participate in our markets to the same extent as they are enforced against U.S. firms. Until now, U.S. antitrust enforcement agencies have often found vital evidence to be out of reach abroad.

At the initiative of Attorney General Reno and Assistant Attorney General Bingaman, this bill was introduced by a bipartisan coalition in both Houses of Congress and quickly won public and business support. I want to commend the bill's sponsors, particularly Chairman Metzenbaum and Senator Thurmond in the Senate, and Chairman Brooks and Representative Fish in the House, as well as the congressional leadership, for introducing and bringing this legislation to my desk so quickly.

I look forward with American consumers and businesses to the strengthened antitrust enforcement that should result from this Act. I am certain that we will achieve the cooperation of our trading partners as we seek to negotiate these agreements on a reciprocal basis.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 2, 1994.

NOTE: H.R. 4781, approved November 2, was assigned Public Law No. 103-438.

Statement on Signing Veterans Benefits Legislation

November 2, 1994

Today I am pleased to sign into law H.R. 5244, the "Veterans' Benefits Improvements Act of 1994" and H.R. 3313, the "Veterans Health Programs Extension Act of 1994." These bills address important areas of concern for our Nation's veterans.

The primary purpose of H.R. 5244, the "Veterans' Benefits Improvements Act of 1994," is to authorize compensation to Persian Gulf War veterans suffering from disabilities resulting from undiagnosed illnesses

possibly incurred during service in the Persian Gulf theater of operations.

Some of our Persian Gulf War veterans are suffering from illnesses that cannot be diagnosed based upon current available scientific and medical data. The lack of a diagnosis at this point, however, should not stop us from providing an expeditious and compassionate response to these veterans' needs. Our Nation is keenly aware of its responsibility to the brave men and women who so capably served our country during the Persian Gulf conflict. This legislation is designed to address their needs.

The Act authorizes the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to compensate Persian Gulf War veterans who suffer chronic disabilities from undiagnosed illnesses that became manifest during or within a specified time after their service in the Gulf region. It also requires the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to develop and implement a uniform and comprehensive medical evaluation protocol for veterans of the Persian Gulf conflict suffering from unexplained illnesses. I am pleased to say that this protocol has already been established. VA medical centers and facilities are currently providing appropriate medical assessment, diagnoses, and treatment to Persian Gulf War veterans.

This Act will help to further our investigation into the adverse health consequences that may be associated with service in the Persian Gulf, including potential risks to the family members of our veterans, by requiring the VA to evaluate the health status of spouses and children of Persian Gulf War veterans. It also requires the VA to implement an outreach program for Persian Gulf War veterans, including a newsletter and a toll-free telephone number to provide information concerning available benefits.

The "Veterans Health Programs Extension Act of 1994," H.R. 3313, will extend the VA's authority to operate a number of veterans programs and activities. Significantly, this Act will extend the VA's authority to provide Persian Gulf War veterans with hospital, nursing home, and outpatient medical care for disabilities possibly incurred from exposure to toxic substances or environmental hazards during service in the Persian Gulf. It also

extends the VA's authority to provide Vietnam veterans with hospital and nursing home care for disabilities, which may have resulted from exposure to dioxin. The Act also extends the VA's authority to provide priority health care services for disabilities possibly related to exposure to ionizing radiation during nuclear testing or during certain service in Japan following World War II. Finally, the Act also authorizes appropriations of \$379.4 million for major medical facility construction and repair projects and 15.8 million for major medical facility leases for the VA.

Because of the important benefits that this legislation will provide to our Nation's veterans and their families, I am very gratified to sign these two bills into law.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 2, 1994.

NOTE: H.R. 5244, approved November 2, was assigned Public Law No. 103-446, and H.R. 3313, approved November 2, was assigned Public Law No. 103-452.

Teleconference Remarks at the State University of New York in Albany, New York

November 3, 1994

The President. Thank you very much. Governor Cuomo, President Swygert, Senator and Mrs. Moynihan, mayors, and ladies and gentlemen, and students: Let me say that I am very excited to be here today with Governor Cuomo and very excited to be a part of this meeting.

I'm anxious to get on with the show and to see the students that are in other places throughout New York. But I want to try to set the stage for the importance of this event today by speaking just for a few minutes about what this means, what we're about to see, what it means for the future of all the students here, for the future of the economy of New York and that of the United States, and for how we will all live in the 21st century.

Governors, like Governor Cuomo—and I used to be one; sometimes I think it's the best job I ever had—[laughter]—but Gov-

ernors have spent, for the last 15 years, increasing amounts of time of education. Why? Because we know that it's the only route to a guaranteed success in life economically; because we know it changes people inside, gives people a greater sense of their own capacity. The ability to develop the internal material that God has given all of us is what makes people want to look to the future and want to make the most of their own lives.

Increasingly, education has become a concern for the National Government, not because we do education—the magic of education occurs in the classroom—but because the power of the United States to lead the world economically is inextricably tied to our capacity to see that all of our children get a good education and then that people seek education for a lifetime. So we have worked hard the last 2 years to do things like expand the Head Start program to make sure that our young people are ready to learn, to have school-to-work opportunities for apprenticeships so that young people who don't go to college can at least get good jobs and have higher level skills, to increase access to college through more affordable college loans for all students. Next year, 110 New York institutions of higher education and 160,000 New York students will be eligible for lower interest, longer repayments on their college loans. So it will be easier for young people to go to college.

But the essence of what we're trying to do is to blend two things that may seem inconsistent, a commitment to educational excellence for all students, including kids who come from poor and difficult backgrounds. One of the things we have tried to reverse in the last 2 years—and the Congress has helped—is the idea that if you come from a tough background you're really not expected to learn as much. All the whole apparatus of Federal law was directed basically toward that assumption. We don't believe that anymore, and it is unacceptable. We believe all of our children can learn, and they should be expected to learn. And high expectations in the classroom has a lot to do with how people do.

The second thing we've tried to do to go with high expectations nationally is to emphasize grassroots reform—to know that all